

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5580

INFO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

USCINCSO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, UY, AR

SUBJ: ARGENTINE-URUGUAYAN PRESIDENTS SEAL BOUNDARY ACCORD

CINCSO FOR POLAD

1. SUMMARY. IN A CORDIAL, FESTIVE ATMOSPHERE, ARGENTINE PRESIDENT PERON AND FONMIN VIGNES, ACCOMPANIED BY LARGE COMMITTEE, VISITED MONTEVIDEO FOR 3-1/2 HOURS NOVEMBER 19 TO SEAL "RIO DE LA PLATA AND ATLANTIC OCEAN BOUNDARY TREATY" AND "ACT OF RIVER PLATE BROTHERHOOD" WITH URUGUAY. ACCORD IS BEING LOCALLY HERALDED AS A FAIR DISTRIBUTION OF BENEFITS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES WHICH COULD GIVE RISE TO A PERIOD OF NEW ECONOMIC COOPERATION, AND AS PROVIDING LEGAL AND POLITICAL PRECEDENTS WHICH COULD AFFECT OTHER NEIGHBORING NATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. ARGENTINE PRESIDENTIAL PARTY WAS GREETED BY LARGE, FRIENDLY CROWD DURING SHORT VISIT TO MONTEVIDEO. IN CEREMONY
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ATTENDED BY RANKING URUGUAYAN CIVILIAN AND MILITARY OFFICIALS,

TWO NATIONS' FOREIGN MINISTERS SIGNED TREATY DELINEATING THEIR RESPECTIVE JURISDICTIONS IN THE RIO DE LA PLATA AND ATLANTIC OCEAN. PRESIDENTS SIGNED ACT OF RIVER PLATE BROTHERHOOD WHICH LAUDS TREATY AS "THE POINT OF DEPARTURE FOR CLOSER COOPERATION IN ALL AREAS" BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

3. WHILE PROVISIONS OF THE TREATY HAVE RECEIVED LARGELY FAVORABLE LOCAL COVERAGE (WE ARE FORWARDING UNDER SEPARATE AIRGRAM FULL TEXT OF TREATY AND ACT, TOGETHER WITH OUR COMMENTS), MAJOR LOCAL INTEREST HAS CENTERED ON "LARGER" IMPORTANCE OF VISIT OF PERON AND THE HEMISPHERIC IMPACT OF THE TREATIES. PERON'S VISIT IS SEEN AS HAVING FULLY INTERRED LOCAL SUSPICION TOWARD THE ARGENTINE LEADER WHICH WAS THE LEGACY OF ARGENTINE-URUGUAYAN ENMITY DURING THE LAST YEARS OF PERON'S PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT. EQUALLY IMPORTANT, LOCAL PRESS IS VIEWING AGREEMENTS AS PRECEDENT FOR NEW AND MEANINGFUL PROGRAM OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, INCLUDING POSSIBLE JOINT FISHING AND PETROLEUM EXPLORATION ENDEAVORS AND MORE FORTHCOMING ARGENTINE CONCESSIONS FOR URUGUAYAN EXPORTS.

4. BOTH PRESIDENTS, BUT ESPECIALLY PRESIDENT PERON, ALSO EMPHASIZED HEMISPHERIC IMPORTANCE OF AGREEMENTS IN THEIR SPEECHES AT SIGNING CEREMONY. PERON NOTED THAT THE ABSENCE OF A BOUNDARY ACCORD HAD IN THE PAST FREQUENTLY LED TO "FOREIGN INTERFERENCE IN THE MUTUAL AND TRUE INTERESTS" OF THE TWO COUNTRIES. HE UNDERLINED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE AGREEMENTS AS PROVIDING "EFFECTIVE REGULATION THROUGH INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTED PROCEDURES FOR MUTUAL CONSULTATIONS WITH REGARD TO THE UTILIZATION OF WATERS AND THE RIVER BED." PERON ALSO EXPRESSED HOPE THAT THE PRINCIPLES IN THE TREATY WOULD BE RECOGNIZED AS A VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION TO INTERNATIONAL LAW. LOCAL PRESS IS INTERPRETING THESE REMARKS AS AN INDIRECT REFERENCE TO ARGENTINE DIFFERENCES WITH BRAZIL OVER RIPARIAN RIGHTS. AND DAO IS REPORTING SEPARATELY ON INTEREST OF LOCAL CHILEAN MILITARY ATTACHE IN TREATY "PRECEDENT" WHICH ARGENTINA WILL USE IN ITS BOUNDARY NEGOTIATIONS WITH CHILE.

5. PRESIDENT BORDABERRY, IN HIS SPEECH, ALSO RECOGNIZED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE IMPORTANCE OF THE AGREEMENTS AS EVIDENCE OF THE "GROWING INTERDEPENDENCE OF TODAY'S WORLD". URUGUAYANS, HOWEVER, APPEARED SOMEWHAT WARY OF BEING CAUGHT UP IN ARGENTINE-BRAZILIAN DIFFERENCES. IN AN OBVIOUS EFFORT TO TEMPER ANY POSSIBLE BRAZILIAN MISGIVINGS, TODAY'S PRESS (NOVEMBER 20) QUOTES A "FUNCTIONARY" OF THE URUGUAYAN FONMIN AS CLARIFYING THAT THE AGREEMENT WITH ARGENTINA IN NO WAY REFLECTS A "PENDULAR MOVEMENT" IN OUR FOREIGN POLICY TOWARD ARGENTINA. FONOFF

SOURCE GOES ON TO NOTE THAT "PREOCCUPATION OF FOREIGN MINISTRY UNDER FONMIN BLANCO IS TO MAINTAIN AND EQUALITARIAN FRIENDSHIP WITH ALL COUNTRIES, ESPECIALLY WITH OUR NEIGHBORS."

6. COMMENT: FOR THOSE WHO EXPERIENCED AT FIRST HAND THE TENSE STATE OF AFFAIRS BETWEEN ARGENTINA AND URUGUAY IN THE LAST YEARS OF PERON'S FORMER PRESIDENCY, AND ESPECIALLY THE CONTEMPT IN WHICH PERON "THE DICTATOR" WAS VIEWED IN MANY DEMOCRATIC QUARTERS, THE ENTHUSIASM OF HIS WELCOME HERE AND THE GLARING HEADLINES - "BORDABERRY AND PERON UN SOLO CORAZON" SEEMED AN ALMOST UNBELIEVABLE PUNCTUATION TO THE POLITICAL COMEBACK OF THIS REMARKABLE MAN.
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